



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Diabetes: What's Your Type?

Prevalence of Diagnosed Diabetes in Adults by Diabetes Type—United States, 2016

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Kathleen Dooling] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Kathleen Dooling.

Diabetes is a common chronic disease and the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.

Dr. Stephen Benoit is with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. He's joining us today to discuss the importance of managing diabetes. Welcome to the show, Stephen.

[Dr. Benoit] Thank you, Kathleen, for having me.

[Dr. Dooling] Stephen, how many people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with diabetes?

[Dr. Benoit] The CDC estimates that about 30 million people in the United States have diabetes. Of those people, almost one in four don't know they have the disease. An additional 84 million adults, or about one third of adults in the U.S. have pre-diabetes which is a condition where the blood sugar is above normal but not high enough to be called diabetes. These people are at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the future.

[Dr. Dooling] What is diabetes?

[Dr. Benoit] Diabetes is a group of diseases where either the body's pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin or the body's cells are not responding well to the insulin that's produced. The result in either case is high blood sugar over a long period of time. There are different types of diabetes and the three main types are Type 1, Type 2, and gestational diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune process where the body attacks itself and stops making insulin. Symptoms typically develop rapidly in Type 1 diabetes and the onset of disease generally occurs in early life—in childhood, teenage years, or early adulthood. There's currently no way to prevent Type 1 diabetes. With Type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't respond well to the insulin that's produced, and this is by far the most common type of diabetes. And the disease generally develops over a longer period of time. It usually occurs in older people, compared to Type 1 diabetes, but not always. There's evidence that Type 2 diabetes can be prevented with lifestyle changes, such as healthy eating and regular physical activity. Finally, gestational diabetes develops during pregnancy and can have a negative impact on the pregnancy if left untreated. Gestational diabetes usually goes away after the pregnancy but these women are at higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes sometime in the future.

[Dr. Dooling] What are the most common symptoms?

[Dr. Benoit] The three most common symptoms of diabetes are increased urination, an increase in thirst or fluid intake, and an increase in appetite. Other symptoms, such as vision changes, sudden weight loss, and fatigue are also common. But symptoms can vary by diabetes type. For example, in Type 1 diabetes, people sometimes present with nausea and vomiting or even stomach pain, and people with Type 2 diabetes sometimes have no symptoms at all.

[Dr. Dooling] How can we decrease our chances of getting type 2 diabetes?

[Dr. Benoit] A healthy lifestyle, which includes losing weight, if you're overweight; healthy eating; and regular physical activity can help prevent Type 2 diabetes. Even a weight loss of just five to seven percent, which, for a 200 pound person is about 10 to 14 pounds, can be effective. Now, the recommendation for physical activity is at least 150 minutes per week of brisk walking or a similar activity. And that equates to about 30 minutes per day, five days a week. Now, a lifestyle change program offered through the CDC-led National Diabetes Prevention Program can help people with pre-diabetes make these changes. The program uses trained coaches who help people make healthy dietary changes, add or increase physical activity, manage stress, and just stay motivated. I would encourage anyone who has pre-diabetes to ask their healthcare provider about joining one of these programs; it can really make a difference.

[Dr. Dooling] How is diabetes treated or managed?

[Dr. Benoit] To start, what works to prevent Type 2 diabetes is also helpful; to manage diabetes of any type, and that's healthy eating and regular physical activity. Secondly, the A-B-C's are critical. The A stands for A1C tests which is a blood test that measures blood sugar control over a two to three month period. These tests should be done at least twice a year and people should know their levels and know their goal. And to reach those goals, oral medications or injectable insulins may be needed. The B in ABC's is for blood pressure. High blood pressure is common in diabetes and can lead to heart disease, stroke, and damage to the kidneys and eyes. Medication is often needed to keep blood pressure within normal ranges. And the C in ABC's is for cholesterol. Again, people with diabetes often have high cholesterol and even those who don't who are between 40 and 75 years of age are usually given cholesterol medication for cardiovascular disease prevention. Preventive services are critical in diabetes. Dilated eye exams, regular foot checks, dental care, and annual flu vaccines are also important, in addition to the ABC's.

[Dr. Dooling] What are the risks if diabetes is not well managed?

[Dr. Benoit] Diabetes complications develop over years if blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol are not managed well. For example, high sugar causes damage to the small blood vessels which primarily affects the eyes, the kidneys, and the nervous system. High blood pressure and cholesterol lead to damage to the cardiovascular system, so therefore, heart attacks, strokes, blindness, kidney disease, nerve pain, and even amputations are some of the complications that occur. It's critical to work with your healthcare team and maintain a healthy diet and regular physical activity to prevent these complications. People with diabetes may also

take advantage of diabetes self-management education and support services that can help them learn more about their condition and how best to manage it.

[Dr. Dooling] Where can listeners get more information about diabetes?

[Dr. Benoit] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/diabetes.

[Dr. Dooling] Thanks, Stephen. I've been talking today with Dr. Stephen Benoit about the importance of managing diabetes. Regular screening can determine if you have or are at risk for getting diabetes. If you've been diagnosed with this condition, talk with your health care provider about a management plan and stick to it.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Kathleen Dooling for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.